Evaluating Web Sites

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**Directions:** Use the following checklist to determine Web sites that are appropriate to recommend to your students. Some items may need to be modified for different grade levels. Enter 2 points for a “yes” answer; 1 point for “partially”; and 0 points for “no.” Add up the points at the bottom of the screen.

35-44—Probably a good resource

20-34—Possibly a good resource, but look at information carefully

0-19—Probably not a good resource

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Web site** | Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki |
| **URL** | http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic\_bombings\_of\_Hiroshima\_and\_Nagasaki |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Yes**  (enter “2”) | **Partially**  (enter “1”) | **No**  (enter “0”) |  |
| **Content** | | | |
| 2 |  |  | 1. Is the purpose of the Web site clear? What is it?  To provide information on the bombs and the effects of the bomb |
| 2 |  |  | 2. Is it clear who created the site? Is the organization or author that created the site credible? What or who it is the author?  Wikipedia |
|  | 1 |  | 3. Are affiliations that might create a built-in bias toward the information, such as a commercial, political, or social agenda easy to identify? What bias do you see?  Hard to tell but slightly towards Japan. |
| 2 |  |  | 4. If the answer to 3, is *partially* or *no*, does the site try to present information fairly and balanced, free from bias (through careful word choice, information from different viewpoints, etc.)? |
|  | 1 |  | 5. Does the site provide unique, useful information that is not widely available? |
| 2 |  |  | 6. Does the site provide research or credible sources to back up its information? Is information appropriately cited? |
|  | 1 |  | 7. Are the credentials of the authors provided, and if so, are they credible? |
| 2 |  |  | 8. Do reputable organizations link to this site? Using the Google search engine, type ***link:*** and the Web site address (example: link:www.website.com ). |
| 2 |  |  | 9. Is the content current and updated frequently? What is the most recent update?  July 2010 |
| 2 |  |  | 10. If there is advertising on the site, is it clearly differentiated from the informational content? |
| 2 |  |  | 11. Is the writing clear and engaging? |
| 2 |  |  | 12. Is the content appropriate for your students? Reading level? Abstract ideas? Mature topics? If there is some inappropriate content, what is it? |
| **18+** | **3+** |  | **Content Total Points =** 21 |
| **Organization and Navigation** | | | |
| 2 |  |  | 1. Does the home page accurately describe the purpose and contents of the site? |
| 2 |  |  | 2. Is moving around in the site easy? Can you always tell where you are and how to get back to the home page? |
| 2 |  |  | 3. Do the links work and do they take you where they say they will? |
|  | 1 |  | 4. Does the site have chats, message boards, or other interactive features that are useful and supportive of the site’s content? Are these features moderated? |
| **6+** | **1+** |  | **Organization and Navigation Total Points =** 7 |
| **Appearance** | | | |
| 2 |  |  | 1. Is the site attractive? |
| 2 |  |  | 2. Are graphics clear and do they add to the information being presented? |
|  |  |  | 3. Does the site have useful and appropriate video, audio, or word processing files to download, view, or hear? |
| **4+** | **+** |  | **Appearance Total Points =** 4 |
| **Technical Performance** | | | |
| 2 |  |  | 1. Is the site reliable and does it load quickly? |
|  |  |  | 2. Does the site require additional plug-ins or software? Would students have easy access to that software? |
|  | 1 |  | 3. Are downloads quick and simple? |
| **2+** | **1+** |  | **Technical Performance Total Points =** 3 |
| **+30** | **5+** |  | **Overall Total Points =** 35 |

**Instruction**

1. At what point in the process of the project would this site be most useful?

At the beginning of the project as a background

1. Which 21st century skills, such as critical thinking or information literacy, will help your students use this site effectively and efficiently?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **21st Century Skill** | | **When and How to Teach** |
| Critical Thinking | | Talk in depth about the bomb and ask for thoughts |
| Information Literacy | | Provide meaningful information on the bomb |
| ICT Literacy | |

Look at the website in class with the students